

**JOINT MEETING WITH  
TOWN COUNCIL, PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD,  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY,  
THE DAVIE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND  
THE DAVIE/COOPER CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 25, 1999**

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. Present from the Town were: Mayor Venis, Vice-Mayor Bush, Councilmembers Cox, Paul and Weiner (arrived 5:46 p.m.), Town Administrator Middaugh, Town Attorney Webber, and Secretary Medina recording the meeting.

**1. SELF INTRODUCTIONS**

Present from the Community Redevelopment Agency were: Chair Neal Kalis and Vice-Chair Tom Gill.

Present from the Planning and Zoning Board were: Lawrence Kuvin and John Pisula.

Present from the Davie Economic Development Council were: Lynn DeLorenzo, Robert Legg, Catherine McKenzie, Patricia Novak, and Cyril Spiro.

Present from the Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Committee were: Dr. Patrick Helma.

Present from Town staff were: Assistant Town Administrator Robert Rawls, Redevelopment Administrator Glenn Irwin, Programs Manager Will Allen, and Economic Development Coordinator Margaret Wu.

**2. DISCUSSION**

**2.1 Westfair/Orange Blossom Festival**

Mr. Spiro provided a brief history of the Orange Blossom Festival and Westfair. Dr. Helma explained that the Chamber began the Orange Blossom Festival 59 years ago with the last 4 years being held in conjunction with Westfair. Basically, the sponsorship had been turned over to Westfair in exchange for monetary compensation. Last year, the Chamber was informed that Westfair could no longer honor this contract due to the loss of revenue. Dr. Helma noted that the Chamber was trying to work with Westfair, not only to assist the Boys and Girls Club, but the entire Town. The intent was for the Chamber to hold the Orange Blossom Festival parade on the Saturday at the end of the Westfair celebration. There would be a barbecue immediately following the parade with a rodeo to follow. Dr. Helma advised that a meeting would be held next week to discuss Westfair.

Councilmember Cox questioned whether the contract monies had been paid this year and indicated that she had not always been in agreement with the way in which Westfair was operated. Dr. Helma responded that the monies had not been paid.

Mr. Spiro expressed his belief that there was a misrepresentation if the Chamber wished to assist the Boys and Girls Club. He felt the real issue was whether Westfair was going to be successful and if there was support to resurrect the Orange Blossom Festival. Councilmember Paul advised that she would like to resurrect the Orange Blossom Festival.

Councilmember Weiner suggested involving the colleges in both the Orange Blossom Festival and Westfair and then reviewing whether or not the festivals should be continued.

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Mr. Kalis advised of an idea by previous Broward Community College Provost Glen Rose in which an event would be held in September to welcome students back to school. Mr. Gill commented that there were several events being held throughout the Town that were in competition with one another.

Chuck Bonfiglio felt it was a good idea to involve the schools and that the Orange Blossom Festival was beneficial to the entire town; however, the festival was a tremendous undertaking. He noted that the intent of the Chamber to enter into an agreement with Westfair was for the Chamber to have a fundraiser which would have eliminated the uncertainty of how much money would be earned each year. Mr. Bonfiglio felt if it was the consensus to move forward with Westfair and that the Town fully support the event including monetary contribution.

Councilmember Cox commented that the attempts in the past to involve the colleges had met with little success and felt that a different type of event might attract the college students. She believed that the levels of commitment needed to be reviewed which would determine how much assistance the Town would provide.

Mr. Spiro questioned whether the Chamber had discussed the financial issues with the Town. Dr. Helma responded negatively and noted that the figures had not been compiled.

Mr. Middaugh explained that this issue had been briefly discussed internally with staff and he felt that both events would probably cost the Town the same amount. He questioned whether consideration had been given for the Chamber and Town to hold their own event with Westfair conducting a separate event. Dr. Helma expressed his opinion that he would like to see the Town remain involved with Westfair. He added that the current contract called for the Chamber to conduct the parade and the barbecue as separate events.

Councilmember Paul felt it was the consensus to return to the hometown feeling and to have arts and crafts and fair type events. She acknowledged the community effort that was put forth to run the festivals and felt the outside agency had taken away the hometown feeling. Councilmember Paul favored returning to the Orange Blossom Festival.

Vice-Mayor Bush was under the impression that the main loss from the event was the underwriting for the concert. Councilmember Cox felt that the concert had been the problem and it should be eliminated.

Mr. Bonfiglio clarified the Chamber's involvement with both events and assured that the Chamber had done everything according to the contract. He reiterated that the monies the Town would expend on the Orange Blossom Festival would be similar to those expended for Westfair.

Mr. Spiro advised that the objective was to raise funds for the Boys and Girls Club. He felt the Orange Blossom Festival allowed many bonds to form; however, the two concepts were not compatible and the question was whether to continue the events. Mr. Spiro suggested that representatives from each group meet to make a decision regarding this matter.

Councilmember Paul questioned whether Westfair was anticipating that the Town would continue to participate. Dr. Helma explained that Westfair was anticipating the Town to cooperate with their plans; however, this had not been discussed at the last meeting.

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Mr. Spiro suggested that Mr. Middaugh meet with Dr. Helma and Mr. Hughes to discuss how many events the Town would sponsor. Furthermore, he suggested that Councilmember Weiner become involved with the educational complex and determine what participation might be anticipated.

Mr. Spiro questioned whether there was a consensus to resurrect the Orange Blossom Festival with the proposal by the Chamber for the parade and the barbecue as the first steps. Additionally, Westfair would conduct separate events and the Orange Blossom Festival could be enlarged. It was the consensus of the attendees to move forward.

Councilmember Cox felt that a goal for the Orange Blossom Festival needed to be determined.

**2.2 Quality of Education in Davie Schools**

Mr. Spiro explained that the genesis of Charter Schools was formed by the Joint Economic Development Steering Committee questioned whether there was any interest in developing a School.

Mayor Venis indicated that Mr. Allen was reviewing the current school situation in the Town and felt the Town should review the issue.

Mr. Allen advised that he had conducted substantial research and that the concept had not been "graded". He noted that the Pembroke Pines School was successful and that Charter Schools were not necessarily a better option. Mr. Allen stated that Charter Schools were part of the Broward County School Board and were not private. He indicated that there were several issues relating to the Schools including parent involvement, overcrowding, class size, discipline, and teaching versus babysitting. Mr. Allen advised that there would be an article in the Davie Update in order to solicit input from the community.

Mayor Venis noted that the major problem with Charter Schools from the School Board's perspective was the benefits package. He indicated that by making the principal and/or assistant principal employees of the municipality, the benefit costs were significantly reduced yet the instructors of the school would be provided a healthy benefits package. Mayor Venis noted that each community's needs were different and he felt that the Town's major concern was overcrowding in the high schools.

Vice-Mayor Bush advised that the School Board was willing to meet with the Town to discuss this issue.

Mr. Spiro stated that the real question was whether the residents felt that the public school system was meeting their needs. He questioned whether a questionnaire would be sent out with the utility bills. Mr. Middaugh commented that a survey in the Davie Update would reach more people.

Art Hurley suggested investing monies in the existing public schools in the Town rather than a Charter School.

Councilmember Paul noted that improved reading the math programs were being brought into the schools by major companies. She stated that most of the schools in the Town had scored relatively well on the "FCAT". There was a challenge for those schools that scored lower to improve and the challenge to the higher scoring schools was to either maintain that achievement or go to the next step.

Mr. Kalis questioned how many students were in the Pembroke Pines Charter School. Mr. Allen responded approximately 700 students.

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Mr. Kalis felt the real issue was accountability. He expressed his displeasure that an alternative source must be sought in order to provide what the current system was intended to provide. Councilmember Weiner concurred and indicated that a major problem with the school system was that the schools could not operate on the monies allotted. He expressed concern with regard to the lack of history of Charter Schools and would like to see the results prior to investing in one.

Mr. Pisula commented that the initial intent for a Charter School was to take over an existing school which would allow the parents to have greater control of the curriculum. Parents were upset that the children were not learning enough because the curriculum was not good. Mr. Bonfiglio advised that from the data he had reviewed, most Charter Schools were not doing any better than public schools.

Mr. Spiro indicated that the question was whether to develop a neutral survey as the next step in the process to review the needs for a Charter School.

Councilmember Cox felt that if a survey was conducted, parents should be questioned as to how many hours a week they could donate to a school. Councilmember Weiner concurred with Councilmember Cox. He noted that everyone was involved in the beginning but did not continue throughout the year and suggested a follow up to determine how many continued to volunteer the amount of time pledged.

**2.3 Planned Commerce Park Proposal**

Mr. Middaugh presented an overview of the Planned Commerce Park proposal and noted that the intent was to implement a planned community. The conclusion of several reports was that the Town should shift from residential to an employment center or other revenue-producing type of activity. There had been several draft models that had tried to fit the Town's concept with little success. Subsequently, it was determined that a specific ordinance needed to be developed that would address a corporate office park.

Ms. DeLorenzo questioned whether staff was proceeding with the ordinance since the Imagination Farms proposal would not be forthcoming. Mr. Middaugh explained that the applicant was moving forward with the housing development with the understanding that the ordinance would move forward and that they may revert to the original proposal.

Ms. DeLorenzo suggested obtaining input from the Economic Development Council.

Mr. Spiro indicated that at the last joint agency meeting, there was a mission statement for the Town to provide a low-density environment that made the Town unique. In order to make this affordable in the future, the commercial base needed to be determined to support this environment. Mr. Spiro felt that the perception of the industry could be distorted and that individuals needed to become educated. Mr. Middaugh concurred and felt the description of the park needed to be carefully explained.

Mr. Pisula felt the biggest problem was that individuals were unsure of what was being proposed and of the parameters. Mr. Spiro commented that within the next 60 days, some numbers would be able to be provided to clarify what the potential impact may be on the Town.

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**2.4 Code Compliance**

Councilmember Weiner expressed the need for additional Code Compliance Officers and noted that this issue had been discussed at the budget hearings. He expressed concern with regard to the mitigations at the Council meetings and the message being set forth. Mr. Kalis concurred. He felt the Town was attempting to fix the economic base and questioned whether the Town was doing an acceptable job of cleaning or maintaining the public areas so that a new business would feel comfortable in the Town. He suggested that the Town provide better Code enforcement and present a better public image.

Mr. Gill recognized problems associated with property owners who installed a sign according to the Code versus a competitor who did not. He suggested that consideration be given to temporary signs until permanent signs were installed.

Wayne Arnold commented that business owners were frustrated with the lack of enforcement with regard to the signs. He felt that if the Code was not going to be enforced, the Town should consider fewer Codes.

It was the consensus that there should be enforcement of the Code along with constant review.

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

**3.1 Agrarian Committee - Committee Representative**

Councilmember Paul distributed a copy of the mission statement and explained that the Committee's goal was to bring agriculture into the Town's economic development plan. She felt there needed to be a blending between the residential, commercial and agricultural properties. Councilmember Paul indicated that agriculture required minimal Town services, created jobs, supported other commercial business, and provided needed services to the community.

Fred Siegel, representing the Broward County Farm Bureau, provided a brief overview of the agriculture's impact on the economy. He displayed a map which showed that the Town and the surrounding communities were the County's agriculture capital. The County ranked 22 out of 67 in the State with only 4% of the land in the County being used for horticultural purposes. This information suggested that the agricultural producers were extremely efficient in their business and the agriculture industry was a large employer in the County. There were more than 3,000 businesses that generated almost \$400 million dollars in annual sales and the equine industry had an economic impact of more than \$500 million dollars of which approximately \$200 million related to tourism.

Mr. Siegel distributed a copy of an article from the Sun Sentinel in which there was an implication from the South Florida Water Management District that the taking and developing of agricultural land led to some of the drainage problems.

Councilmember Paul summarized that the goal of the Committee was to educate individuals that agriculture land was not vacant land with a negative economic base, but was a positive economic influence on the tax base that contributed both economically and ecologically to the community.

Mr. Pisula commented that agricultural businesses were encountering problems with being classified as either a small or a large parcel. Councilmember Paul advised that the size of the parcel should have no bearing on the business. She noted that there had been ongoing meetings with the Development Services Department in order to understand the needs of the businesses and to enhance the working situation.

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**3.2 Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) - Neal Kalis, Chair**

Mr. Kalis explained that the Streetscape Project for Davie Road was in the process of being completed and the CRA was working with the affected business owners in order to keep the inconvenience to a minimum. The east side of Davie Road was anticipated to be completed in three months with the west side of Davie Road being completed some time in the summer. Property had been purchased in the east side neighborhood area, also known as Potter Park, as well as some Habitat for Humanity houses being constructed. The CRA was working with the Police Department and the Code Compliance Division to clean up the area. The CRA had purchased three lots on SW 63rd Avenue with the intention of providing parking in the downtown area.

Mr. Kalis cited an issue relative to the longevity of the CRA and felt the longevity had been secured without receiving additional approvals from the County. He added that the western theme revisions were being reviewed.

**3.3 Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce - Dr. Pat Helma, President**

Dr. Helma announced that upcoming events included: a business card exchange (October 27th); a Westfair meeting (November 2nd); a Florida Radio luncheon (November 26th); a rodeo (November 27th); and the Chamber's holiday social event (December 15th). He noted that the Chamber was restructuring and was looking for a new executive director.

Kathy McKenzie advised that the travel auction had raised approximately \$6,000.

**3.4 Davie Economic Development Council (EDC) - Cyril Spiro, Chair**

Mr. Spiro reiterated that the EDC's objective was to focus on the Town's economic future. He advised that the next meeting would be on November 9th with discussion being on crime and its impact on economic development.

**3.5 Davie Merchants and Industrial Association - Wayne Arnold, President**

Mr. Arnold provided a brief overview of the Association formed in 1987 and advised that the goal of the Association was to provide a voice for business owners. He complimented the CRA on its efforts to revitalize the area and noted that businesses were seeing a unity between themselves and the community. Mr. Arnold advised that there was a strong interest in the Town and in development and the Association's philosophy was that not all development was bad. He felt it was important to take a common sense approach to development throughout the Town and he provided an overview of the organizational format.

**3.6 Planning and Zoning Board - George Greb, Chair**

Larry Kuvin, Planning and Zoning Board member, noted that the Board was a diverse and hardworking Board and the members came well prepared to address all the issues. He expressed frustration in the fact that Council did not always agree with the Board's decision; however, he acknowledged that Council had its own feelings relative to issues.

John Pisula, Planning and Zoning Board member, echoed Mr. Kuvin's comments relative to the Board members who were selected and how well the Board worked together. He felt the meeting with the CRA helped the Board to be aware of planning issues. Mr. Pisula noted the importance of meeting with the Economic Development Council to foresee what the Town would face in the future.

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Mr. Kalis commented that the final draft of the CRA's Code revisions had been submitted to Council. He thanked everyone who had been involved including Council, staff, and the collective community effort.

**3.7 South Florida Education Center (SFEC) - Allison Smith, Executive Director, SFEC/TMA**

Ms. Smith noted the following information regarding economic development: Broward Community College was planning to renovate the campus bookstore and student center which would become the focal point for student support services and would be approximately 61,000 square feet. It was anticipated to be completed in 2001. There would be a new child development center, which would begin in February 2000, would be a 7,500 square-foot facility with an anticipated enrollment in excess of 100 students. This would afford students with child care while attending classes. Additionally, there would be computer certification programs in partnership with several companies as part of the Teacher Educational Alliance Program which identified high school students who wanted to become teachers. Successful graduates were rewarded with a preferred status in the Broward County School System.

Ms. Smith advised that the McFatter Vocational and Technical Center would be hosting an Economic Workforce Summit on November 9th. This summit would assist Broward County companies with expanding and workforce upgrading. By utilizing tax dollars, training was offered at low rates.

Ms. Smith reported that the Broward County Commission approved a \$41 million new Library, Research, and Information Technology Center for Nova Southeastern University. She presented an overview of the improvements and the proposed buildings. Ms. Smith added that a \$4 million grant had also been awarded to Nova's School of Business and Entrepreneurialships.

With regard to the traffic, the Traffic Management Agency (TMA) was working with McFatter to develop a solution whereby buses were being rerouted onto McFatter's property and were being sent to the Nova schools in order to alleviate some of the traffic congestion. Ms. Smith noted that there was a shuttle service to the Tri-Rail facility and the shuttles were being used during lunch hours to transport people to the downtown area. She advised of a demonstration project in which pick ups would be made at some of the larger apartment complexes.

**3.8 Town Council/Town Administrator - Robert Middaugh, Town Administrator**

Mr. Middaugh referenced the damage caused by Hurricane Irene and noted the awareness of the problems that had been made to staff and Council. He advised that a goal setting session was being scheduled and he felt this session would provide the opportunity to submit the start of his relationship with the Council and solicit from Council the direction it envisioned for staff. In the future, Mr. Middaugh indicated that the capital budget and supplemental operating budget would be addressed and added felt that staff was trying to move forward with changing the "bureaucracy". He noted that a customer satisfaction survey along with staff training would be provided and he was working on ways for the Town's departments to work together.

Dalia Alonso commented that she believed there was an important relationship between development, over population and drainage which should be carefully balanced.

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Mr. Kalis referenced an advertisement from the Farm Bureau which questioned the flow of the water discharge after the storm and why the water did not recede. This event provided the opportunity to recharge the Everglades and the hydraulics of the system



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prohibited salt-water intrusion. Mr. Kalis felt that the Town's cluster development was misunderstood which could be a way to allow for additional growth with less impact on open space, if done correctly.

Ms. Alonso felt the Town was already over developed and that the drainage issues should have been addressed 25 years ago. Mr. Kalis commented that the pressure for development would not go away. He felt this was a resource management issue and the Town should review who was responsible for protecting the resources and to allow responsible development and/or redevelopment.

Mr. Arnold felt that earlier drainage planning by the South Florida Water Management was needed and it was his belief that residents needed to be aware. He added that new programs should be implemented.

**4. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS**

There were no further comments or suggestions.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no objections or further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

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Mayor/Councilmember

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Town Clerk